

**Parks and Environment Committee - For Record- Item PE 23.1**

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**To:** <pec@toronto.ca>  
**Date:** 2013-10-18 7:29 PM  
**Subject:** For Record- Item PE 23.1

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**Parks & Environment Committee -for Record- Item PE 23.1**

Greetings Members of the Parks and Environment Committee,

My name is Rachel Roth, I am the Executive Director at Greenest City, and I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the efforts put forth from your committee and the many dedicated stakeholders across our city towards coordinating and advancing urban agriculture activities. I urge the adoption and implementation of the proposed Toronto Agricultural Program and look forward in seeing more. Furthermore, I believe GrowTO's Agriculture Action Plan outlines a number of necessary strategies to increase urban food production. Greenest City has focused efforts towards urban agriculture since 1996, and in that time our organization has witnessed the power food *has* in bringing community members together, and the myriad of environmental benefits that come along with it.

The influence that growing food together has towards increasing community engagement is insurmountable. Over the years, Greenest City has seen a number of different groups from a variety of backgrounds all over our city work, share, and enjoy urban agriculture activities together.

What is even more impressive are the environmental benefits from growing food locally: a reduction of food miles and associated ghg emissions, mitigation of the urban heat island effect, and a reduction of rainwater runoff.

Furthermore, urban agriculture combined with the right programming can help many of our marginalized communities' reach the goal of being food secure.

Greenest City is a charitable organization dedicated to solutions that inspire diverse communities to green Toronto. Greenest City has three integrated program streams: education, food security/urban agriculture and growing a green workforce. Our programs focus on making Toronto more food secure and ecologically sustainable. All of our programs promote active and healthy choices and create opportunities for social and environmental change.

Our latest and most exciting project we are exploring is focused on year-round urban greenhouse rooftop farms on a meaningful scale. Our project's goal is to bring fresh produce to the urban community and to imprint the importance of growing local and accessible food. Our proposed model is a self-sustaining operation both financially and environmentally. Whereby the produce grown is sold to

local restaurants and to residents through grocery stores and farmer's markets, combined with using the latest ecologically sound growing systems and technologies.

I believe our efforts would be further supported through the adoption of the staff recommendations on October 23rd.

Sincerely,

Rachel Roth



Rachel Roth, Executive Director

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